

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

10/679,175

Applicant(s)

MILLER ET AL.

Examiner

Minh-Chau T. Pham

Art Unit

1724

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to Response filed on 12/20/06.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-9 and 11-14 (renumbered as 1-13 respectively).
3. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.

THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
- (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
- 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material

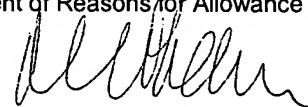
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application

6. ☒ Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____

7. ☒ Examiner's Amendment/Comment

8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance

9. ☐ Other _____


Minh-Chau Pham
Patent Examiner
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An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Mr. Michael McNeil on March 9, 2007.

The application has been amended as follows: Claim 11 depends on – claim 9 – instead of canceled “claim 10”.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 1-9 and 11-14 allowed.

The closest relevant art is Gullett (5,846,416) wherein Gullett discloses a filter assembly (10) comprising a center support (40, col. 5, lines 39-45) having a filter head attachment (30) at one end, a bowl attachment (21) at an opposite end, and a plurality of radial openings (53) disposed on the center support (40) and being located between the two ends, and a filter element (50) mounted on the center support (40). Gullett further discloses connecting means (200, col. 4, lines 27-29, lines 38-40, col. 5, lines 14-18) for connecting or engaging the two attachments to the center support. Gullett also discloses a center support is threaded (see col. 2, lines 46-51, col. 3, lines 26-30 and lines 48-54, col. 6, lines 1-9), therefore, it is inherently understood that the threaded end of the center support would provide rotatable attachment to and detachment from a filter head. Gullett also discloses a method of servicing a filter comprising the steps of detaching the center support from the filter head and reattaching the center support to

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the filter head. It is inherently understood that once the filter element is removed from the center support, the filter element is cleaned or washed before being put back on the center support for servicing.

Claims 1-9 and 11-14 differ from the disclosure of Gullett in that the center support has a bowl attachment adjacent an opposite end for rotatable attachment to and detachment from a bowl, and this feature is not disclosed by Gullett.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Minh-Chau T. Pham whose telephone number is (571) 272-1163. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon/Tues/Thur/Fri 7:00 am - 5:30 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Duane Smith can be reached on (571) 272-1166. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.



Minh-Chau Pham
Patent Examiner
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March 8, 2007

DUANE SMITH
PRIMARY EXAMINER

D. Smith
3-9-07